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ABSTRACT

A short course on improving college teaching at Escuela Agricola Panamericana (EAP), in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, is discussed. Two University of Florida college faculty members were engaged by the United States Information Agency to conduct the 2-week course for EAP college faculty. Course objectives included: identifying the role of the teacher and major learning principles, describing a procedure for developing college courses and lesson plans, selecting and using a variety of teaching methods, developing and using visual aids, and developing tests. The workshop began on September 8, 1986 with a 2-hour general session. Weekday morning seminar sessions were conducted in English and night sessions were translated into Spanish. Twenty-four faculty from EAP completed the course, and several other faculty attended one or more sessions. The U.S. faculty members also consulted with staff regarding current educational programs and possible revisions. Information is provided on workshop textbooks, the course schedule, and topics and reading assignments. Workshop evaluation questions and the results are also presented. Major accomplishments of the activity are specified, along with recommendations for the future. (SW)

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A FACULTY SHORT COURSE ON IMPROVING COLLEGE TEACHING

at

Escuela Agricola Panamericana
Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Central America

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A FACULTY SHORT COURSE ON IMPROVING COLLEGE TEACHING AT ESCUELA AGRICOLA PANAMERICANA TEGUCIGALPA, HONDURAS CENTRAL AMERICA

Introduction

The United States Information Agency (USIA) requested two faculty members from the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at the University of Florida to conduct a two-week short course for college faculty at the Escuela Agricola Panamericana (EAP) in Tegucigalpa, Honduras on improving college teaching. Specifically they requested Dr. Jimmy G. Cheek and Dr. Carl E. Beeman to conduct this activity. The Department and faculty agreed to do this because this activity is consistent with our departmental mission, our desire to become more actively involved in international education in Central America, and the desire of the Office of International Programs within the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) for our department to become more involved in international education. The dates of the short course were September 7-20, 1986.

This paper will present the major items accomplished and learned as a result of this activity.

Purpose and Objectives

The major purpose of the short course was to improve college teaching at EAP. The specific objectives were to:

1. Describe and define teaching and the role of the teacher.
2. Identify the major principles of learning.
3. Describe a systematic procedure for developing college courses and developing lesson plans.

4. Write course and lesson objectives.
5. Identify and utilize the steps in the teaching process.
6. Select and effectively use a variety of teaching methods and strategies.
7. Develop and effectively use selected visual aids.
8. Video tape selected participants teaching a class and provide individual critiques.
9. Identify types of tests and characteristics of good tests.
10. Develop tests to measure what students have learned.
11. Identify and use methods to continually improve college teaching.

Procedure

The workshop began on Monday, September 8, 1986 with a two hour general session for all participants. Participants were asked to identify their strengths and weaknesses in teaching and areas where they need further assistance. This provided needed faculty input to modify the tentative short course agenda. Seminar sessions were then held on each week day, with a morning session from 9:00am to 11:00am in English, and a night session from 7:00pm to 9:00pm translated into Spanish by an interpreter. In addition, on Friday, September 19, a final dinner meeting was held and certificates of completion were presented to the participants. Twenty-four faculty from EAP were recognized for completing the course. Several other faculty attended one or more sessions.

In addition, Dr's. Beeman and Cheek spent time consulting with faculty and administrators regarding current educational programs and possible revisions to make them more effective. Opportunity was also

provided to observe the operation and the educational programs at EAP, including opportunities to visit with faculty and students, observe lecture and labs, observe students applying what they had learned via the "Module" system, and observing the extension outreach programs of the school and their interface with other governmental agencies.

Two text books were provided to each seminar participant. The books were: Teaching Tips: A Guidebook for the Beginning College Teacher by Wilbert J. McKeachie and Instructors and Their Jobs by W. R. Miller and H. C. Rose. In addition, 24 different journal articles were reproduced and provided to participants. Participants were required to develop overhead transparencies for instructional use. Additional text books and educational materials were placed in the EAP library.

Agenda

The following agenda for the short course was used:

Faculty Short Course on
Improving College Teaching
Escuela Agricola Panamericana
September 7-20, 1986

Topics	Reading Assignments
Monday	
General Meeting with Faculty - Introductions - Seminar Objectives - Procedure Establish and refine agenda	
Tuesday	
The Teacher and the Teaching Role - What is teaching? - What is the purpose of teaching? - What is the role of the teacher?	Chapter 1, Miller and Rose; Chapters 1, 6, 26, and 27 McKeachie

Topics	Reading Assignments
Wednesday	
The Learning Process and Principles of Learning	Chapters 2 and 3, Miller and Rose; Chapter 24 McKeachie
Thursday and Friday	
Developing a Course - Parameter - Content - Objectives - Activities - Structure, Sequence, Timing of Content	Chapters 4 and 5, Miller and Rose; Chapter 2, McKeachie
Lesson Planning - Components of lesson plans - Developing lesson plans	
Objectives - Characteristics - Development	
The Teaching Process and Student Motivation	Chapter 23, McKeachie
Monday and Tuesday	
Teaching Methods and Strategies - Selecting appropriate teaching methods	Chapter 7, Miller and Rose
Strategies - Speech - Questioning - Body language - Listening - Learning activities (application techniques, assignments) - The physical environment (lighting, seating, arrangement)	
Methods - Lecture - Demonstration - Method - Result - Project method and independent study - Discussion/questioning - Problem solving - Audiotutorial instruction	Chapter 7, McKeachie Chapter 7, Rose and Miller Chapter 9, Rose and Miller Chapter 11, Rose and Miller Chapter 12, McKeachie Chapters 4 and 5, McKeachie Chapter 15, McKeachie

Topics	Reading Assignments
Wednesday	
Evaluation of Learning - Types of tests - Characteristics of tests - Developing tests	Chapters 8 and 9, McKeachie Chapter 12, Rose and Miller
Thursday	
Developing and Using Written Visual Aids in Instruction - Chalkboard - Overhead projector and transparencies - Films - Slides - Charts - Slide-tape presentations - Video tapes	Chapters 6 and 10, Rose and Miller, Chapters 15 and 18, McKeachie
Friday	
Improving Your Teaching Summary Short Course Evaluation	Chapters 3, 19, 20, 25, 29, 30, 31, McKeachie Chapter 13, Rose and Miller

Video Taping and Critiquing of Selected Faculty Members was done Tuesday-Thursday.

Evaluation

Each seminar participant was asked to evaluate the short course at the final session. The results of the evaluation were very positive.

The major results are presented below:

Questions			
1. Did the course accomplish its major objective of increasing your teaching effectiveness?	Yes 100%	No 0%	
2. How would you evaluate the overall effectiveness of the course.	Excellent 73%	Good 27%	Poor 0%
3. Will your behavior as a teacher be positively changed as the result of this course?	Yes 100%	No 0%	

Questions

4. Would you be interested in enrolling in future short courses at EAP in the following areas?	Yes	No
A. Developing and using visual aids such as 2x2 vericolor slides, overhead transparencies, posters, and basic photography with emphasis on "hands-on" development and use.	88%	12%
B. Planning more effective courses by developing objectives, planning teaching-learning activities, and developing tests.	100%	0%
C. Classroom teaching improvement with at least one video taping session and critique of each participant.	88%	12%

D. List other topics in which you desire a workshop (please specify). (Those listed by several participants were as follows:)
   - Video taping techniques.
   - Evaluation methods (testing).
   - Preparation and organization of lectures.
   - Development of the curriculum.
   - Thesis project management.

Results

As a result of this activity, the following major accomplishments were realized:

1. Faculty at EAP were exposed to a variety of concepts that provided them with necessary knowledge to improve teaching.
2. Faculty in the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at the University of Florida increased their knowledge of Central America and agricultural education in the region.
3. A linkage has been further established between EAP and the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at the University of Florida that should provide a long term mutually beneficial relationship.

Recommendations

Based upon our experience with the short course at EAP, conversations with faculty and administrators, and observations of the educational program, the following recommendations are made:

1. The EAP and the Department of Agricultural and Extension Education at the University of Florida continue to work cooperatively together.
2. That a similar short course on improving college teaching be offered to new faculty at EAP. We would recommend that a short course be offered every 3 to 5 years depending upon the number of new faculty employed.
3. The EAP seek support to develop an instructional material development center that faculty could use to develop visual instructional materials such as overhead transparencies, 2x2 slides, posters, and similar materials. The Department of Agricultural and Extension Education is willing to identify equipment and personnel needed and to assist in the development of such a center.
4. That one of the following short courses be offered annually over the next three year period:
    A. Developing and using visual aids such as 2x2 vericolor slides, overhead transparencies, posters, and basic photography with emphasis on "hands-on" development and use.
    B. Planning more effective courses by examining courses in the curriculum to eliminate duplication, insure

proper course content and articulation, developing course objectives, planning teaching-learning activities, and developing tests to measure course objectives.

C. Improvement of classroom teaching with at least one video taping session and critique of each participant.

Each short course would be approximately 5 days in length.

Summary

The Escuela Agricola Panamericana has an excellent educational program in place. It is commendable that the administrators and faculty saw the need to further improve the teaching abilities of the faculty. This short course on improving college teaching was a first step in helping the faculty at EAP become better teachers. It is our desire to continue to work with the faculty and administrators at EAP with the goal of improving the overall educational program.